

# **Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2013**

**Archie R. Cole Middle School Cafeteria**

**100 Cedar Avenue**

**East Greenwich, RI 02818**

**School Committee members in attendance were Dr. Deidre Gifford, Vice-Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Ms. Carolyn Mark, Mr. Jack Sommer; Mr. Clark Smith, and Mrs. Susan Records. Mr. David Green, Chair was absent. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent and Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration were also in attendance.**

**Town Council members in attendance were Mr. Michael Isaacs, President; Mr. Jeff Cianciolo, Vice-President; Mr. Brad Bishop, Mr. Michael Kiernan, and Mr. Mark Gee. Mr. William Sequino, Town Manager and Mr. James Patti, Town Moderator were also in attendance.**

## **7:07p.m. Regular Meeting**

### **I. Call to Order**

**Dr. Gifford called the School Committee to order and Mr. Isaacs called the Town Council to order.**

### **II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

**The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**

### **III. Budget session with Town Council**

**Mr. Isaacs asked Dr. Mercurio to give a brief overview of the FY2014 budget. Dr. Mercurio provided the Council with a summary of the FY2014 budget and five-year capital improvement plan. He highlighted the FY2014 budget, FY2014 revenues, major initiatives, and upcoming challenges. Mr. Cianciolo asked about one-time costs incurred for grade reconfiguration and recurring costs. Dr. Mercurio explained the recurring cost of hiring a 0.2FTE Physical Education Teacher at Cole. This staff member is not eligible for benefits so the cost will be relatively small. This is the only staff increase due to reconfiguration. Moving costs for materials is about \$20,000. Mr. Cianciolo also asked if the town and district are looking at upgrading the telephone system/services. Dr. Mercurio said the school district and town have a meeting scheduled for May 6, 2013 to discuss shared opportunities. Mr. Kiernan questioned the percentage increase/decrease in funding due to the reconfiguration (moving Frenchtown grade three to Eldredge and Meadowbrook to Hanaford).**

**He asked why the cost is so much higher for the school who is gaining a grade in relation to the school that is losing a grade. Dr. Mercurio explained the shift is partly due to supplies/materials, and upgrades in technology. Mrs. Crawford will provide the Town Council with a breakdown of the associated costs due to the reconfiguration.**

**Mr. Bishop asked if the district has any additional information about state aid and questioned what can be done to reduce the burden on taxpayers if additional funds are received. Dr. Mercurio has not**

heard discussion regarding any increase in funds and said if there is an increase that would require School Committee discussion. If state aid funding comes in higher than projected prior to the FTM, the budget can be adjusted.

#### **IV. FTM Protocol Review**

Town Moderator Mr. James Patti noted the Financial Town Meeting (FTM) will take place on Tuesday, June 11, 2013 at 6:30p.m. The rules of the FTM are the same as last year. The Town Charter requires that 250 electors be present to constitute a quorum. Mr. Patti suggested that the town work to change the Town Charter and abolish the FTM. He explained that the budget process is open to citizens and is highly publicized. He estimates the cost of the FTM to total \$5,000-\$6000. He would like to see those funds go towards an EG Scholarship Fund. Mr. Isaacs noted this item can be discussed in the future after the FTM and when posted for discussion. The Town Council left the School Committee meeting at 7:41p.m. to continue their meeting in the library.

#### **V. Public Comments**

Mrs. Cheryl Osborne questioned the recurring cost for a .2FTE physical education position at Cole. Dr. Mercurio explained the position is recurring because it will be needed each year.

#### **VI. Approval of Minutes**

##### **a. Regular and executive for April 2, 2013**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the regular and executive minutes for April 2, 2013.

## **VII. Superintendent's Report**

**An education forum is scheduled for May 9, 2013 at 6:30p.m. in the Town Council Chambers. R.I. Board of Education Chairwoman Eva Mancuso will discuss how students and teachers should be evaluated. The public is invited. The district calendar survey for 2014-2015 closed on April 5, 2013. There were 714 total responses (539 responses from parents/community and 175 from staff). There were a total of 211 comments. Dr. Mercurio and Mr. Green spoke with two local individuals who are interested in facilitating strategic planning for the district. Both individuals have impressive backgrounds and offered to do the work for a nominal fee. Each candidate will outline their proposal and submit it to Dr. Mercurio. A recommendation will be presented at the May 7th School Committee meeting. Dr. Mercurio thanked the press for their article which noted the need for a facilitator. Dr. Mercurio gave an overview of the Mandarin Chinese Pilot for East Greenwich High School which was presented at a previous meeting. The results of the June 2011 language survey were discussed for the benefit of the new School Committee members. Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Perrett will be meeting with Dr. He at U.R.I. on May 3, 2013. Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Perrett will attend the high school PTG meeting tomorrow to garner support and discuss possibilities. Dr. Mercurio thanked Mrs. Perrett for her tireless efforts in this project. Mr. Green and Dr. Mercurio will also visit Bryant University on Friday, April 26, 2013 to speak with the Assistant Director at the Confucius Institute. Currently 15-20 students participate in the after school Mandarin program at Cole.**

Today Dr. Mercurio received a call from Hexagon Metrology (formerly Brown & Sharpe). They are facilitating a discussion surrounding framework to support future engineers. An administrator from the district will attend this upcoming discussion. Administrators from North Kingstown were also invited. Ms. Mark asked about the timeline of launching the Mandarin program in the fall. Dr. Mercurio said there are questions that still need to be answered (i.e. classroom space, schedule, etc.). He would like the program to take place in a lab setting after school. The goal is to schedule and advertise the program before students' leave in June. Mr. Sommer asked if the Mandarin program can be discussed at the May 7th meeting. Mrs. Winters asked if any other schools in the state besides Barrington have a Mandarin class. Dr. Mercurio said Barrington is the only district and their course is for credit. Dr. Gifford asked about the involvement by the language department chair and how faculty and staff are being incorporated. Dr. Mercurio said there has been ongoing communication with the curriculum council and both Mrs. Gendreau and Mr. Podraza have been involved and supportive.

#### **VIII. School Committee Concerns**

Ms. Mark asked Dr. Mercurio if the district has information available for parents regarding the move to the common core. Dr. Mercurio noted there are a number of links on the district website that provide resources for parents. Dr. Mercurio offered to present further information on this topic at the May 7th School Committee meeting. Mr. Sommer asked if the security report is available from Chief Coyle. Dr. Mercurio will check the status for the next meeting.

## **X. Action Items**

### **a. Retirement-Linda St. Ours**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 6-0 to accept the retirement. A formal recognition will take place at the June 4, 2013 School Committee Meeting.

### **b. Appointments**

- 1. Cole Baseball Volunteer- Mark Sylvia**
- 2. EGHS Boys' Lacrosse Volunteer-Ethan Zink**
- 3. EGHS Boys' Lacrosse Volunteer-Dave Lemont**
- 4. EGHS Boys' Lacrosse Volunteer-Brian Hennesse**

On a motion by Ms. Mark, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted-6-0 to approve the appointments pending completion of the required documentation for coaching.

### **c. Home School request- grade 11**

On a motion by Mr. Sommer, which was seconded by Ms. Mark, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve the home school request. Dr. Mercurio noted the parent is a former college educator and will use the current EGHS curriculum.

## **XI. Discussion**

### **a. Letter to support Commissioner Gist**

Dr. Gifford drafted a letter to Governor Chafee in support of Commissioner Gist. This letter will be circulated to the Committee and voted on at the May 7th School Committee meeting.

## **XII. Adjournment**

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Ms. Mark, the

**Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 8:07p.m.**

**CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO**

**SECRETARY**